



*The 110th Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session made progress for the American people on the toughest challenges we face—we've worked together to restore accountability, grow our economy, strengthen our families, defend our country and preserve our planet.*

*Since January, we've taken America in a new direction passing 130 key measures in the House, nearly 70 percent with significant bipartisan support. However, in other critical instances, the President and his Republican allies in Congress have stubbornly stood in the way of progress with more than 40 vetoes threatened.*

*Below is a list of Congressman Tierney's and the Democratic Congress's accomplishments in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session:*

## **Making Higher Education Affordable and Accessible to All**

- ✓ The House passed the *College Cost Reduction Act (H.R. 2669)* with a bi-partisan majority of 273 to 149. Congressman Tierney helped craft this key legislation that makes the single largest investment in college financial aid since the GI Bill, helping millions of students pay for college (at no new cost to taxpayers). Unnecessary special interest subsidies to private lenders were rescinded to secure funding for these college access initiatives. This bill became law on September 27, 2007. Under the new law, 6.8 million students who take out need-based federal student loans each year will see the interest rates on their loans halved over the next five years; saving the typical borrower (with \$13,800 in need-based loan debt) \$4,400 over the life of the loan, once fully implemented. The bill also boosts maximum Pell grant scholarships to \$5,400 over the next five years, up from \$4,050 in 2006. Also included in this legislation are increases in loan forgiveness for college students, a measure adopted from the Tierney "Service Pays" bill. Loan forgiveness in the amount of one thousand dollars per year up to five years is available for borrowers seeking careers in a number of public service professions, including first responders, law enforcement personnel, firefighters, nurses, public defenders, prosecutors and early childhood educators.
- ✓ The Committee on Education and Labor on which Congressman Tierney serves, approved the legislation reauthorizing the Higher Education Act entitled the *College Opportunity and Affordability Act (H.R. 4137)* by a vote of 45-0 on November 15. This legislation includes landmark measures drafted by the Congressman to address the rising price of college by encouraging colleges to rein in price increases. The bill also increases student aid and includes provisions which clean up corrupt practices in student loan programs, streamline the federal financial aid application process, address textbook costs and provide support programs for veterans and military families. In addition, this bill repeals a rule that unfairly reduces Pell Grant scholarship aid for low-income college students who attend low-cost colleges and universities.

*"Higher education has become more important than ever to ensure America's economic prosperity, national security and global competitiveness. Congress must provide the necessary support so that as many students as possible can realize their dream of attending an institution of higher education without the impending fear of burdensome debt upon graduation," said Congressman Tierney.*

## **Enhancing Early Education**

- ✓ The *Improving Head Start Act of 2007 (H.R. 1429)*, which Congressman Tierney strongly supported, was signed into law on December 12, 2007. Head Start has been the premiere early education program in the United States for more than 40 years. Research and data show that up to 50% of America's student achievement gaps could be closed with more early childhood education opportunities. This bill would provide an estimated 10,000 more children access to Head Start.

*"Regrettably, too few children are accessing quality early education programs. In Massachusetts, an estimated 80% of three year olds are not enrolled in a state Pre-K or Head Start program. While some children may attend private programs, there is an immediate need for additional services. By enacting this important legislation, we have the opportunity to improve and expand the federal government's primary early education program," said Congressman Tierney.*

## **Reinvigorating America's Workforce**

- ✓ With Representative Hilda Solis (D-CA), Congressman Tierney co-authored the innovative *Green Jobs Act of 2007*. The legislation aims to help meet the renewable and alternative energy industries' demands for a skilled work force, while boosting America's global competitiveness in those industries. The bill has been included as part of energy legislation entitled the *Renewable Fuels, Consumer Protection, and Energy Efficiency Act of 2007*, which was signed into law on December 19, 2007

*"Training our workers in renewable energy industries will help reinvigorate America's economy and improve our global competitiveness. This funding will not only bring green jobs to communities across the country, it will help ensure that the United States remains at the forefront of global innovation," said Congressman Tierney.*

## **Implementing Key 9/11 Commission Recommendations**

- ✓ The new majority, with Representative Tierney's vote, passed *H.R. 1, Implementing the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act of 2007*. The bill will provide risk-based funding and improved communication capabilities for local first responders along with addressing security concerns at our nation's ports. This bill has been signed into law.

*"I have long recognized that whether the targets are ports, nuclear power plants, office buildings or landmarks our local first responders must be able to effectively speak to one another and share information. By establishing a separate communications interoperability grant program at the Department of Homeland Security, H.R. 1 will finally help our local police, firemen and emergency personnel get the equipment they need," said Tierney.*

## **Conducting Thorough Government Oversight**

- ✓ At the beginning of this year, Congressman Tierney became Chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee's Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs. The National Security Subcommittee has jurisdiction over federal programs relating to national security, foreign policy and homeland security. The Subcommittee has engaged in robust oversight measures. For instance, his subcommittee convened the first congressional oversight hearing at Walter Reed Army Medical Center after news reports detailed serious problems with the care and treatment of soldiers. There were two subsequent hearings on the matter, and more

are expected in the New Year as the Subcommittee continues to monitor the situation to ensure that changes are affected as soon as possible. Congressman Tierney's subcommittee has also reviewed U.S. policy toward Pakistan and allegations of waste, fraud and abuse in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Gulf Coast reconstruction efforts.

*"I am especially pleased to be chairing the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs. My current work as a member on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence will be very informative to this new role, and it is my hope I can use my experience in this arena to the benefit of my colleagues and country," said Tierney.*

## **Supporting Our Wounded Warriors**

- ✓ As Chairman of the National Security Subcommittee, Congressman Tierney chaired the first congressional hearing on the inadequate care and attention our soldiers were receiving at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Since the first hearing on March 5, 2007, the Subcommittee has held "follow up" hearings to ensure measures were being taken to fix these serious problems.
- ✓ The hearings at Walter Reed led to the swift passage of legislation entitled *The Wounded Warriors Act (H.R. 1528)*, which aimed to correct the wrongs at Walter Reed and to meet the needs of servicemen and women serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Congressman Tierney voted in favor of this legislation, which passed by a vote of 426 to 0, and which was later included as a piece of the Fiscal Year 2008 Defense Authorization Act that will soon be signed into law.
- ✓ The reform efforts continued with the passage of the *FY 2008 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act*, a bill that substantially enhances investments to meet veterans' needs. In line with his promise to work to improve the care all veterans receive, Congressman Tierney voted in favor of this legislation, which provided the largest increase in funding in the VA's 77 year history.
- ✓ In response to the findings of the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors, which was led by former Senator Bob Dole and former Secretary of The Health and Human Services Department Donna Shalala, Congressman Tierney has pledged to continue intense scrutiny of veterans' healthcare and to see that the important recommendations suggested in the report are implemented.

*"I am pleased that – following the news reports revealing the shameful mistreatment of wounded soldiers at Walter Reed – the Democratic Congress took action and passed important legislation. Moving forward, I will continue to work to ensure that each soldier and his or her family is receiving appropriate care and is treated with the utmost respect," said Congressman Tierney.*

## **Enforcing Strict Ethics in Campaigning and Governing**

- ✓ On the very first day of the 110th Congress, Congressman Tierney voted in favor of a landmark House rules package implementing the most comprehensive ethics reforms in a generation for Congress.
- ✓ Congressman Tierney is the author of the only bipartisan legislation in the House to create a system for the public financing of congressional campaigns. His *Clean Money, Clean Elections Act (H.R. 1614)* creates a voluntary system that gives candidates an option to forgo private funding without having to undermine their ability to run a competitive campaign. It also allows qualified candidates to run for public office without compromising their independence, since they won't have to ask for money from those with a vested interest in public policy.
- ✓ Congressman Tierney also supported the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act (S.1), which, among other things, imposes new disclosure and transparency requirements on lobbyists, strengthens restrictions on post congressional employment, denies taxpayer-funded pension benefits to Members of Congress convicted of corruption, and expands public disclosure of Members' travel and finances. The final version of this bill was signed into law in September.

*"Members represent the people of their districts, not the lobbyists who populate K Street. Americans deserve an honest government that represents their needs," said Congressman Tierney.*

## **Calling for International Action in Darfur**

- ✓ Congressman Tierney chaired a National Security Subcommittee hearing titled, "Darfur and the Olympics: An International Call to Action". The hearing highlighted steps China, the United States and all countries of the world can take to live up to the 2008 Beijing Olympic theme - "One World, One Dream" - by putting an end to the tragic events in Darfur. Congressman Tierney has also called for divestment to help end genocide in Sudan by co-sponsoring *The Darfur Accountability and Divestment Act (DADA) of 2007 (H.R. 180)*, which passed the house in July and which was incorporated into legislation (S.2271, the Sudan Accountability and Divestment Act) that is soon expected to be signed into law.

*"I believe that sustained action in Darfur is necessary, and I will continue working hard until peace in the region is no longer a dream, but a reality. It is estimated that, over the past two decades, 2 million Sudanese have died due to war or famine, and millions more have been displaced from their homes. Sudan's 21-year civil war has remained a major contributing factor to the nation's persistent humanitarian crisis and further complicates relief efforts in the region," said Congressman Tierney.*

## **Quelling Tides of International Extremism**

- ✓ In April, Congressman Tierney led a delegation of Members of Congress to Pakistan to meet with senior officials and local leaders. Upon return, the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs conducted an oversight hearing into Pakistan's extremist madrassas, schools boasting a pro-jihad curriculum which can be a breeding ground of terror, and what we should be doing about them. As follow-up, Congressman Tierney offered an amendment to the FY 2008 Department of State, Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill (H.R. 2764). The amendment, which was in line with the 9/11 Commission's Report recommendations, sought to reprogram the millions of dollars in United States support for the Pakistani government toward specific and accountable educational programs for Pakistani children. This amendment, which ultimately reprogrammed \$75 million for 2008, passed the House on June 21, 2007.
- ✓ Thereafter, the National Security and Foreign Affairs Subcommittee held an oversight hearing to explore the Administration's policies toward Pakistan. Following President Musharraf's imposition of martial law, the Bush Administration came around to the view shared by Congressman Tierney and a number of his colleagues that our aid should no longer be simply given as a cash transfer to the Musharraf government; rather it should be spent directly on programs – like basic education, redevelopment and healthcare – that directly benefit the Pakistani people and support long-term U.S. national security interests.
- ✓ To close the year, Congressman Tierney convened a Subcommittee hearing on the January 8, 2008 elections in Pakistan and their profound effect on U.S. national security, including the hunt for senior al Qaeda leadership, the need for the U.S. to support the moderate and democratic forces in Pakistan as a long-term and sustainable bulwark against extremism.

*"Pakistan remains absolutely vital to U.S. national security. The United States needs to send a powerful message at this critical juncture that we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the Pakistani people in their pursuit of education for their children and democracy for their country," said Congressman Tierney.*